

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-22 are in this application. Applicants have amended claim 1 Applicants have canceled claims 2 and 22.

In this amendment, Applicant has canceled claims 2 through 22 from further consideration in this application. Applicant is not conceding that the subject matter encompassed by the claims 2 through 22 is not patentable. Claims 2 through 22 were canceled in this amendment solely to facilitate expeditious prosecution of the remaining claims. Applicant respectfully reserves the right to pursue additional claims, including the subject matter encompassed by the claims 2 through 22 as presented prior to this amendment in one or more continuing applications.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-4, 6-13 and 15-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Furusawa et al. (US 6,934,738) in view of Wang et al (US 6,314,454). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Furusawa describes a message processing apparatus that handles messages exchanged over a network and explicitly notifies the recipient of the importance and other information regarding each received message. Wang describes a system allows users to send certified electronic mail messages. A server receives an electronic mail message designated for certified delivery. The server forwards the electronic mail message to a receiving account. Any action taken upon the message by the receiving account is conveyed to the server, which forwards that information to the sender.

Applicant has amended the claim such that embodiments of the present invention perform periodic checks to determine whether a recipient has completed a local action requirement. These checks are automatically done by the method until the action has been completed or as defined by the message sender. Furusawa does provide for a message reminder from the dialog box. However, these reminders occur as part of the initialization of an application. These reminders are not the result of a periodic check by the method of the Applicant's present invention.

In addition, in an embodiment of Applicant's invention, the recipient supplies information to indicate that the recipient has completed the required action (step 47 of Figure 9). Applicant submits that this step is not described in Furusawa or Wang.

Applicant submits that the Examiner has failed to present a prima facie case of obviousness. As indicated above, Furusawa, the primary reference, fails to teach or teaches away from (inter alia) performing periodic checks to determine whether the recipient has performed the required action.

Wang fails to provide the deficiencies of using a periodic check and using information provided by the recipient to determine whether the recipient has completed the required action. Thus, Wang fails to teach the missing limitations. Moreover, there is no motivation to combine Furusawa with Wang, and such a combination would fail to provide the missing limitations. Thus, Furusawa alone or in combination with Wang fails to support a finding of obviousness.

For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that the Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of the claims.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Applicant believes this reply to be fully responsive to all outstanding issues and place this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

No other fees are believed to be due. Although the Office Letter date is February 6, 2008, Applicant did not become aware of the office letter until March 7, 2008. At that point, Applicant submitted a change of address form. The file history even shows that the office letter was not delivered to Applicant's attorney. Applicant has responded to the office letter within three of Applicant becoming aware of this office letter.

Respectfully Submitted,
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